

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

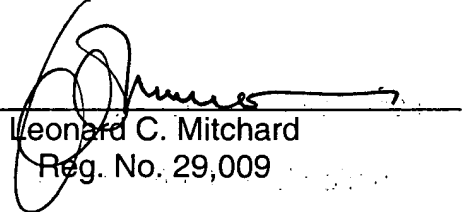
The above amendments are to insert a cross-reference to the PCT application upon which this National Phase application is based, and to revise the claims from the originally published format to correct/remove multiple dependencies. Claims 1-17 have been cancelled and new claims 18-33 are added. In addition, the Abstract is presented on a separate sheet attached to this amendment.

Applicants await an early action on the merits. If the Examiner finds this case is not now in condition for allowance and believes that an interview prior to first action would be helpful in focussing and/or resolving issues, applicants request the Examiner to contact their representative at the telephone number listed below to arrange a telephonic or personal interview.

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Leonard C. Mitchard  
Reg. No. 29,009

LCM:lfm  
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22203-1808  
Telephone: (703) 816-4000  
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100